



Camellia Club of Mobile

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December 2024

Please join us for our December meeting and Christmas celebration!

Our December meeting and Christmas celebration will be held December 8th. Potluck social begins at 2:00 p.m., so please bring a favorite dish to share. The Club will provide the main meat dish.

If you haven't already, please let Marie Stringfellow know what dish you'll be bringing.

We'll also have a great auction featuring beautiful camellia plants!

The building will open at 1:00 p.m., with potluck prep starting at 1:30 p.m.

Meeting location:

Jon Archer Agricultural Center
1070 Schillinger Rd N
Mobile, AL 36608

We look forward to joyfully celebrating the Christmas season with everyone!

A Glimpse into the History of Davis Nurseries and the Davis Family



At our November meeting, George Davis, representing his family legacy, shared an engaging account with us on the history of Davis Nurseries and the Davis family. Davis Nurseries, established in 1912 in Coden, Alabama, became renowned for its camellias under Alden Evan Davis Jr.'s leadership. The nursery's camellias, widely recognized for their quality, were featured at sites like the Alabama Governor's Mansion and Bellingrath Gardens. Despite enduring challenges, including the devastating 1962 freeze, the nursery adapted and thrived for decades. Under Alden Jr.'s dedicated leadership, Davis Nurseries left an enduring legacy in gardens across the Southeast, where its renowned camellias continue to bloom.

Below are some of the well-known varieties originated by Davis Nurseries



Evan Davis

Camellia japonica

Year of Origination: 1956

Named after Evan Bennett Davis, founder of Davis Nurseries, this variety embodies the legacy of the nursery's camellia breeding. Evan Davis produces large, semi-double blooms in a rich, deep red. Its petals are slightly ruffled, giving the flower a soft, textured appearance. Known for its hardiness and striking color, Evan Davis has been popular in the Southeast, where it thrives in both sun and shade, and has a prolonged blooming season, bringing vibrant color to gardens for extended periods.



Ethel Davis
Camellia japonica
Year of Origination: 1946



Ethel Davis (Variegated)
Camellia japonica
Year of Origination: 1957



Rose Dawn
Camellia japonica
Year of Origination: 1944



Daydream
Camellia sasanqua
Year of Origination: 1948



Winifred Womack
Camellia japonica
Year of Origination: 1955

Gulf Coast Camellia Society

Camellia Club of Mobile (CCofM) President Larry Heard was installed as President of the Gulf Coast Camellia Society (GCCS) at their recent annual conference held in Pensacola, Florida. He will serve for a two year term.

Founded in 1962, the GCCS was formed to promote the cultivation and appreciation of camellias, a flower deeply associated with the Gulf Coast region. The society traces its roots to Mobile, our wonderful city with a long-standing connection to the camellia plant, which thrives in our region's warm, humid climate. Mobile's dedication to camellias goes back to the early 1800s when the flower was introduced to the area, quickly becoming a favorite among gardeners and horticulturists.

Mobile is often considered the birthplace of organized camellia societies in the United States. By the mid-20th century, local interest in camellias blossomed into the formation of the GCCS. The society provided a platform for enthusiasts from along the Gulf Coast—from Texas to Florida—to exchange ideas, showcase their gardens, and organize events like camellia shows and educational forums.

One of the key figures in establishing the society was former CCofM member Tom Dodd Sr., a well-known plantsman from Mobile, whose nursery played a significant role in distributing camellias throughout the Southeast. His passion for horticulture inspired the formation of the GCCS, which encouraged camellia growers to connect and share their expertise.

Current CCofM member Jim Smelley, also a founding member of GCCS, recently reminisced about the first GCCS meeting which was held at the historic **Roosevelt Hotel in New Orleans**. Mr. Smelley is a distinguished figure in the Southern camellia community, renowned for his extensive expertise and dedication to camellia cultivation.

Jim Dwyer has also served as president of the GCCS and has been deeply involved with CCofM. His leadership and contributions to camellia enthusiasts in the region are well-regarded.

Long-time past members of CCofM Harry F. 'Pat' Ryan, Walter Creighton, and James T. 'Jim' Oates, left a lasting legacy in the camellia community. Each served as President of both CCofM and the GCCS, devoting years of leadership and enthusiasm to the promotion and appreciation of camellias. Their dedication helped shape the path for future generations, and their impact is fondly remembered by all who knew them.

Through the years, the GCCS has been involved in numerous initiatives to preserve rare camellia species, educate the public on best practices for growing camellias, and organize regional shows where camellia blooms are exhibited and judged. The society continues to play an important role in maintaining Mobile's reputation as a center of camellia culture.

The GCCS distributes a quarterly magazine, ***The Gulf Coast Camellian***, which is packed with engaging articles about its members, Gulf Coast events, and fascinating insights into the world of camellias. Each issue offers a mix of educational articles on camellia care, expert growing tips, and highlights of camellia shows and garden tours. It's a wonderful resource for both seasoned enthusiasts and newcomers, helping to connect the camellia community across the Gulf Coast and beyond. Whether you're looking for inspiration for your own garden or learning about camellia history, ***The Gulf Coast Camellian*** is an invaluable part of membership.

The GCCS 2025 conference will be held in Mississippi and hosted by the **Mississippi Gulf Coast Camellia Society**. We hope you will make plans to attend.

If you are not a member of GCCS you can join by clicking here>>> **Gulf Coast Camellia Society**.



Merry Christmas

**Wishing all our members peace, joy, and plenty of
camellia cheer this holiday season!**



Christmas Carol



Christmas Eve



Christmas Day



Christmas Cheer



Christmas Beauty



Christmas Beauty Var



Christmas Daffodil



Christmas Rose

**For additional information regarding
Camellia Club of Mobile please visit
our website:**
<http://www.mobilecamellia.org/>

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